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Activities of the Department of Public Information: news services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 65/107 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from July 2010 to February 2011 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its news services.

News services, which is one of three subprogrammes of the Department and implemented by its News and Media Division, is responsible for strengthening support for the United Nations by enhancing the quality, format and timeliness of information products on the Organization, and for increasing the geographic range and frequency of use of its products by media outlets and other users.

The activities of the other subprogrammes of the Department — strategic communications services and outreach services — are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General.[1]

[1] A/AC.198/2011/2 and A/AC.198/2011/4 respectively.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 65/107 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-second session and requested the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called on the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services.

3. The present report, which considers the news and media-related activities of the Department, highlights progress made in the area of radio, television, video, photographic, print and Internet services to media and other users globally. A particular focus of the report is the use of multilingualism on the Department website. The growing use of new media, including YouTube and Facebook, is also highlighted.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department for the period July 2010 to February 2011.

II. News services

A. Overview

5. Throughout the reporting period, the Department of Public Information continued its efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of its news and media-related products and services, while seeking new ways of reaching the widest possible audiences in all parts of the world. To this end, the Department maintained a strong emphasis on traditional means of communication, while at the same time capitalizing on the opportunities presented by the expansion of web-based and mobile platforms and the proliferation of social networking sites. As a result, it was able to deliver its products to a growing number of viewers and listeners.

6. The number of pickups of the daily feed of news and feature material provided by the UNifeed distribution system almost doubled compared to the same period in 2009, according to the data compiled by the Teletrax monitoring system. The coverage by Department of Public Information outlets of the earthquake in Haiti and the efforts of the United Nations to deal with the consequences of the tragedy drew particularly strong interest from the public and the media. Efforts by the Department to establish new partnerships, and to build on existing ones — both with the United Nations agencies and field missions providing content, and with the broadcasters and media outlets carrying its materials — helped to sustain the trend of audience growth in the months following the spike triggered by the earthquake.

7. With multilingualism remaining a key goal in all of its activities, the Department continued to encourage other departments and offices to provide content for their segments on the United Nations website in all official languages. Achieving multilingualism was also an important aspect of the work of the Department in new

media: it launched social media initiatives in French and Chinese, and built on its Spanish-language presence.

8. The period under review was marked by ongoing efforts to deal with the challenges posed by the capital master plan, including the dispersal of staff among several buildings and the logistical complexities of providing television and radio coverage and ensuring effective media liaison during a series of high-level events in connection with the opening of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. As part of its activities related to the capital master plan, the Department continued to work on the procurement and planning phase of a new media asset management system, which will enable quicker and more efficient access to United Nations news and media products when the Department returns to the Secretariat building in 2012.

B. United Nations Radio

9. United Nations Radio has continued to enhance its news services, in the six official languages, plus Portuguese and Kiswahili, by providing news, features and special programmes on United Nations priority issues. Throughout the reporting period, United Nations Radio produced a range of programmes highlighting such topics as the Millennium Development Goals (including a series on gender equality), peacekeeping and the conduct of elections in conflict-affected countries. United Nations Radio also created special programming that commemorated events designated by the United Nations, including Nelson Mandela Day and the International Year of Youth, and focused on the United Nations relief and humanitarian effort in Haiti, with special reports and interviews to mark the one-year anniversary of the earthquake.

10. Highlights of United Nations Radio coverage included:

(a) *The Millennium Development Goals*: the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals that preceded the general debate of the General Assembly, including the new drive on improving maternal health;

(b) *Election monitoring*: United Nations efforts in support of elections in several countries, including conflict-affected countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti;

(c) *Peacekeeping*: developments and activities of United Nations missions in Lebanon, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad/the Central African Republic, Darfur, the Sudan and Haiti;

(d) *Climate change*: the coverage included extensive reporting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan, the conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Cancun, Mexico, among other events, and the new efforts of the Secretary-General on global sustainability;

(e) *The Middle East*: United Nations work related to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine, including the activities of the Quartet and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), as well as the panels looking into the Gaza flotilla incident;

(f) *Youth*: a range of developments, in particular the events connected to the International Year of Youth;

(g) *Africa*: peace and security issues, the fight against malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, and efforts by the World Food Programme and others to deal with hunger and food shortages;

(h) *Disarmament*: the high-level meeting on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament, held on the sidelines of the General Assembly, the visit of the Secretary-General to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and his five-point proposal for a world free of nuclear weapons.

11. A major focus of programming continued to be Africa, where several partnerships with broadcasters have been strengthened, including through improved lines of communication and more efficient distribution mechanisms. In response to requests from a number of English-language stations, United Nations Radio is now sending content via e-mail links or MP3 files. This method, which has already been used for transmitting programming in Kiswahili, Spanish and French, has received positive feedback from partner stations.

12. As part of its efforts to enhance its multimedia presentation, United Nations Radio designed and developed new web pages to document progress since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 15 years ago. These websites include multimedia web 2.0 features and social networking and bookmarking tools and allow users to post comments and participate in discussions. During its coverage of the general debate of the General Assembly, United Nations Radio accompanied its stories with links to video footage of speakers addressing the session.

13. United Nations Radio continues to expand its reach using social media, with positive results:

(a) United Nations Radio has 21,000 social media followers, a growth of nearly 275 per cent over the second half of 2010;

(b) As at the end of 2010, 4.4 per cent of total visits to the English radio website came from social networking sources (up from 1.4 per cent in 2009). This trend was also visible on United Nations Radio web pages in other languages: 7 per cent in Portuguese (up from 2.3 per cent), 5 per cent in French (up from 1 per cent), 5 per cent in Arabic (up from 0.5 per cent), and 21 per cent in Kiswahili (up from 1 per cent).

14. United Nations Radio has also increased the number of its partners: 15 radio stations were added during this period, including ANSA Latina in Brazil, Union Estereo in Colombia, Maarifa FM in the United Republic of Tanzania and Radio 2Fun in Bangladesh.

C. United Nations Television

15. Responding to the needs of media outlets and audiences around the world, United Nations Television continued to enhance its operations in three main areas: providing live feeds from meetings and other major events at United Nations Headquarters; producing varied news and feature-style programming; and generating video material for the broadest possible use on a growing number of web and mobile platforms.

16. *Live coverage*. Whether it was gavel-to-gavel coverage of the meetings of the Security Council or transmissions from the general debate in the General Assembly, the broadcast-quality live feeds from major events and activities at United Nations Headquarters in New York and the United Nations Office at Geneva remained one of the core services provided by the Department. This programming is also available via the UNifeed distribution platform, as well as United Nations Webcast and such outlets as the United Nations Channel on Time Warner Cable in New York. The ready-to-air coverage was closely monitored and widely used by international broadcasters and television news agencies, including Associated Press Television News (APTN), Reuters and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

17. While taking steps to ensure uninterrupted coverage during renovations related to the capital master plan, the Department was actively involved in preparations for the introduction of a new media asset management system. The new system will have an impact on work flows in all key areas of the Department's audio, video and photo operations and lead to a more coherent multimedia approach to delivering content, including live feeds.

18. The Department's feature programming includes a flagship monthly news magazine show, *21st Century*. Transmitted by more than 50 international broadcasters globally, the programme has continued to gain international recognition:

(a) A special feature documentary on the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia was recently shown at the Asia Society in New York, followed by a panel discussion. Another recent feature on the rape of women during the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been shown widely at film festivals and other events;

(b) A piece on the plight of Middle Eastern refugees in Greece was shown at the United Nations Association Film Festival at Stanford University.

19. In developing its feature programming, the Department has established co-production and cooperation partnerships with a wide range of United Nations organizations and offices, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now part of UN-Women), the United Nations Democracy Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the Government of the Netherlands.

20. *UN in Action*. From July 2010 through February 2011, United Nations Television produced 35 instalments of this award-winning series, distributing them to 60 broadcasters in different parts of the world. Among them, CNN International (in English and Spanish) continued to run *UN in Action* pieces as part of its *World View* show, offering global exposure to United Nations Television's programming. The series, which is available in English, French, Russian and Spanish, is often produced in close cooperation with United Nations agencies, funds and peacekeeping missions, incorporating their material into short films that are then distributed to broadcasters.

21. An example of United Nations Television's successful partnership with United Nations system organizations is a series of five *UN in Action* stories focusing on the Millennium Development Goals from the perspective of women. Commissioned by UNIFEM, the series was filmed in Botswana, Cambodia, Colombia, Haiti and Liberia, and released to broadcasters in September 2010 to coincide with the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

22. *Year in Review*. Given the traditionally strong interest of media outlets in retrospective stories each December, United Nations Television produced its programme *Year in Review* to highlight the work of the Organization in key areas and the major issues that dominated its agenda in 2010. The programme was distributed to broadcasters and United Nations information offices around the globe.

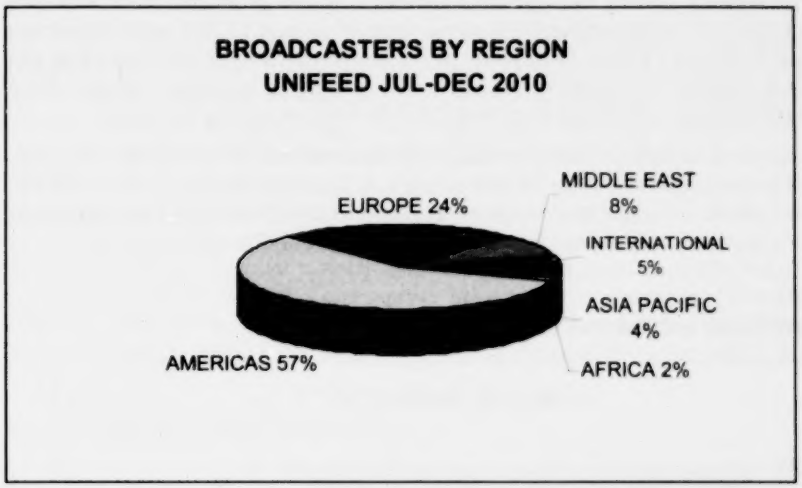
23. *United Nations Television Channel*, a key part of the Department's efforts to reach wider audiences through local cable operators and online television news services, has increased the variety and scope of its programming. The United Nations Channel, which since 2009 can be accessed in the New York metropolitan area on Time Warner Cable, channel 150, shows United Nations Television live broadcasts, as well as feature programmes and material produced by other United Nations entities.

24. *UNifeed*. Entering its fifth year of operation as an inter-agency platform offering breaking news and features from a single distribution point, UNifeed continued to serve hundreds of major broadcasters in all regions of the world. It is transmitted from United Nations Headquarters in New York via satellite six days a week through APTN, reaching more than 1,000 broadcast points globally. Selected stories are also distributed to Thompson-Reuters and Eurovision. As part of this cooperative effort, more than 40 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as peacekeeping missions and other entities, provide content to the service. From July to December 2010, material produced by United Nations Television, including coverage of conferences and events and exclusive interviews, accounted for some 37 per cent of UNifeed stories.

25. While overall pickup of UNifeed material continued to show steady growth, the period under review witnessed a notable change in regional trends. According to the Teletrax monitoring system, there was a substantial increase in the pickup of UNifeed satellite transmissions by broadcasters in the Americas, particularly in the United States of America. Pickup of UNifeed material by broadcasters in the Americas expanded to 57 per cent of overall use of UNifeed stories in 2010, compared to 3 per cent in 2009. Pickup by United States broadcasters increased significantly following the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010.

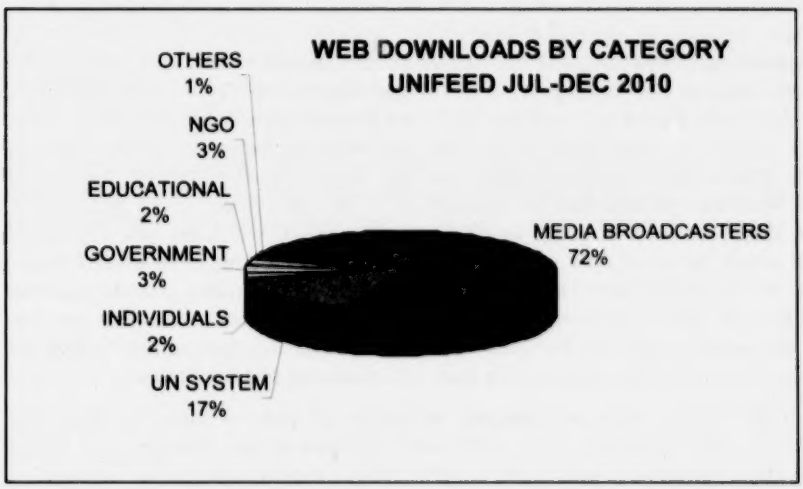
26. National broadcasters in Europe made up 24 per cent of users, while international broadcasters such as China Central Television (CCTV), France 24, Al-Jazeera International, BBC World, BBC Arabic, Voice of America and Russia Today stood at 5 per cent (see figure I below). The United States accounted for the greatest number of broadcasters using UNifeed material; at the same time, Teletrax monitoring showed that outlets in the Middle East, while fewer in number, made use of UNifeed stories with greater frequency. Outlets with the highest pickup rates included the Islamic Republic of Iran's Press TV and Al-Alam, as well as regional channels including Al Arabiyah and Al Hurra.

Figure I
Pickups of UNifeed by region, July-December 2010



27. In 2010, UNifeed entered the third year of its online operation, which enables media outlets and other users to download broadcast-quality video easily in both NTSC and PAL versions. The UNifeed website is particularly valuable for the media in developing countries, because it provides content for smaller broadcast outlets in Africa, Asia and Latin America that cannot access the APTN satellite. As figure II below shows, the UNifeed website is expanding its outreach to non-governmental organizations, governmental agencies, educational institutions and individuals who rely on UNifeed for United Nations news content.

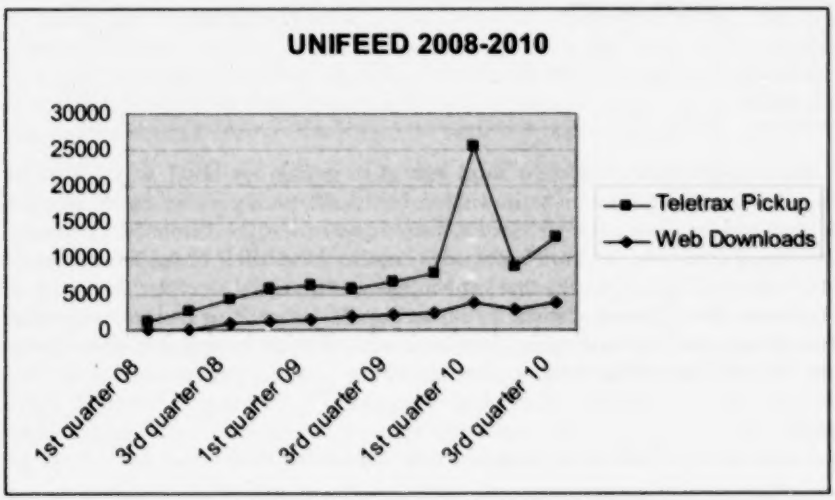
Figure II
Web downloads of UNifeed by category, July-December 2010



28. Since July 2010, all aspects of the UNifeed operation have shown substantial growth, including story production and distribution, both satellite and online (see figure III below). During the reporting period, UNifeed produced more than 800 stories. From July to November 2010 alone, there were over 13,850 satellite pickups and more than 6,211 online downloads of the stories. In January 2010, pickup and downloads spiked in response to UNifeed's extensive coverage of the Haiti earthquake, totalling 17,412 pickups and 2,419 downloads during the month.

29. According to Teletrax data, the use of UNifeed stories doubled in the last year, from 18,540 pickups in 2009 to 36,993 pickups in 2010. (It should be noted that this does not include all usage, but only what is monitored by Teletrax.) Web downloads also saw a significant increase from 7,853 in 2009 to 10,277 in 2010.

Figure III
Web downloads and Teletrax pickup of UNifeed, 2008-2010



30. Webcasting. Expanding the use of live streaming and on-demand video on the web remained an important part of the Department's efforts to help audiences around the world follow proceedings at United Nations Headquarters in New York, or other venues, in real time, or to view coverage of important United Nations meetings and events as archived video. For the current reporting period, the United Nations Webcast website had an average of 1 million video views per month. Website traffic peaked from 20 to 29 September 2010, when the site registered 809,346 video views of live and on-demand coverage of the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, the general debate of the General Assembly and other high-level events at the start of the new Assembly session. During the same period, the Webcast team made available a total of 603 videos for on-demand access by users from more than 195 countries and territories.

31. United Nations Webcast launched an enhanced website (http://www.un.org/webcast) in mid-September 2010, with new database-driven features and better quality video. Visitors can now share United Nations videos using social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, or embed them directly into their own web

pages. United Nations Webcast also facilitates internal communication by covering town hall meetings, training sessions and interviews with senior United Nations officials.

32. The Department's Webcast Unit also plays a lead role in maintaining the United Nations Channel on YouTube (www.youtube.com/unitednations), which has been steadily increasing its audience amid efforts to increase user engagement and expand interactive features. Among new additions to the United Nations Channel is a segment featuring topical videos produced on a daily basis for the United Nations website home page to highlight key developments and issues in the news. The United Nations Channel on YouTube has already registered over 2.5 million video views and has over 10,000 subscribers. Over 1,600 videos have been made available, with new content updated on a daily basis. Special projects and play lists are created to raise awareness and convey information on particular issues. A video about the flooding in Pakistan became the second most viewed video on the United Nations Channel on YouTube, with over 146,000 views within a very short time.

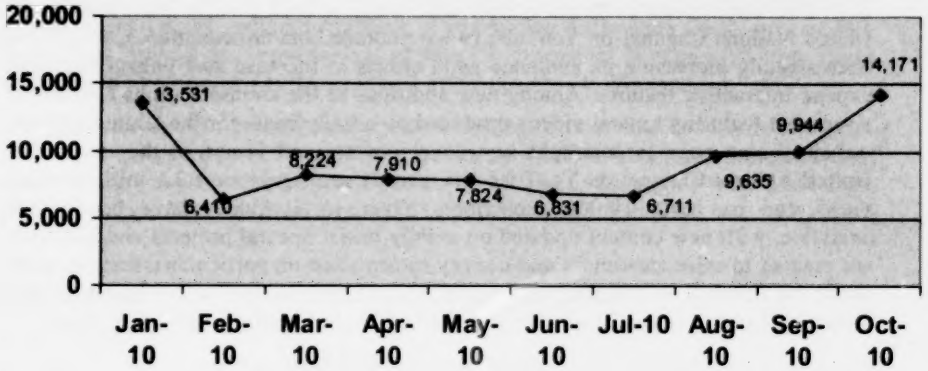
D. Promoting multimedia products

33. The Department continued to explore new and creative ways to widen the reach of its multimedia products to new audiences, using electronic distribution methods and new social media platforms. It also maintained its traditional ways of distributing multimedia products on demand for delegations, the media and members of the public, as well as United Nations family organizations through its audio and video libraries.

34. *United Nations Photo*. Demand for United Nations Photo coverage continued to grow during the reporting period (see figures IV and V). In the first six months alone, United Nations Photo covered about 1,000 events, including the visits of the Secretary-General to 18 countries, resulting in some 3,200 images being selected and made available to the public in high resolution on the United Nations Photo website. Close to half a million unique page views were registered in September 2010, reflecting heightened interest in the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals and the general debate in the General Assembly. Additional images were ingested into the Networked Interactive Content Access (NICA) system, and provided upon request to the permanent missions and members of the public through the Photo Library.

35. The NICA system was upgraded during the reporting period, bringing about improvements such as a simplified and more efficient workflow of editing images and expanded search capabilities.

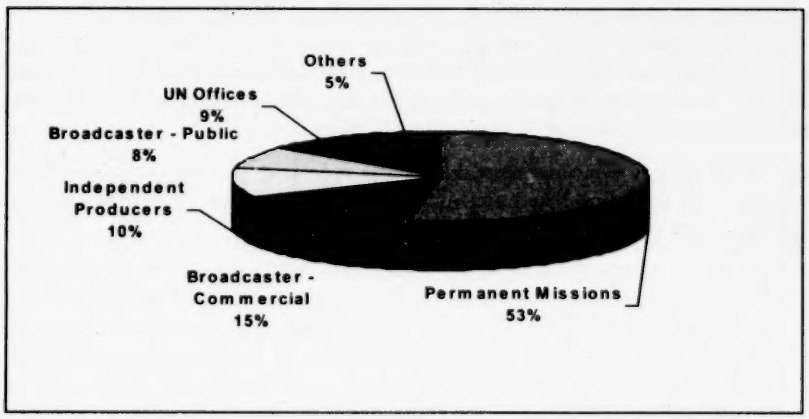
Figure IV
Downloads of high-resolution images from the United Nations Photo website, January-October 2010



36. It was clear from the images either viewed or downloaded that field coverage of United Nations activities and projects on the ground consistently received more attention from the public than images of meetings and events at Headquarters. United Nations Photo has been actively seeking creative ways to increase field coverage within existing resources.

37. In addition to current coverage, United Nations Photo is working with the Photo Library to make available to the public more legacy photos documenting the accomplishments of the Organization over the years. An additional 3,500 legacy images that have been digitized and retouched, with newly edited captions, were made available to the public during the reporting period.

Figure V
Clients served by type, United Nations Visual Library, September 2010



38. Nearly 3,000 images, mostly of United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian work, have been posted to Flickr, a social media platform for high-quality photographs, reaching a younger and more diverse audience and directing

more people to other United Nations content on the Internet. The United Nations Photo Flickr photostream is poised to reach one million cumulative views in early 2011.

39. The Department's multimedia websites have seen significant improvements during the reporting period. New sites were created for United Nations Television's *21st Century* and *UN in Action* series, enabling registered users to download broadcast-quality versions of the programmes. Other news and media websites were redesigned to feature a common United Nations multimedia branding. A new federated search engine now enables users to search through all of the United Nations multimedia sites using a single interface.

40. As part of its continuing efforts to preserve and provide access to the unique historical audio-visual archives of the United Nations, during the reporting period the Department completed a comprehensive inventory, appraisal and selection programme of the entire audio-visual collection spanning the history of the Organization dating back to the time of the League of Nations. The Department's historical audio-visual collection comprises almost 86,000 items, or approximately 93,000 hours of audio-visual materials.

41. This exercise paved the way for the digitization of the Department's entire audio-visual collection, which will provide easier access for the public and preserve this unique heritage for future generations. The Department is seeking the support of Member States to fund this very important project. The digital collection will be managed through the media asset management system that the Organization is acquiring as part of the capital master plan and will be easily accessible from other enterprise-level systems.

42. Given the rapidly changing media environment, the Department continued to strengthen its efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of its products and services. Since April 2010, a monthly statistical report has been compiled on the use of various news and media products, yielding useful insights into the coverage of specific events and issues, as well as trends in the use of traditional and emerging media platforms. These emerging trends are complemented by face-to-face meetings and telephone contacts with clients, and traditional outreach at regional media conferences. To further improve the effectiveness of its services based on user feedback, the Department is undertaking a survey of all broadcasters who currently receive or obtain United Nations Radio and United Nations Television programmes.

E. United Nations News Centre

43. The multilingual United Nations News Centre portal on the United Nations website continued to serve as the main gateway to breaking news about United Nations activities around the world and as an in-depth resource on developments and issues in the news. News dispatches were frequently supplemented by multimedia materials and interactive features, such as Photo Stories galleries, monthly Top Stories selections, News Quiz entries and related audio and video links. In-depth interviews with United Nations officials under the Newsmaker series and special thematic News Focus pages added scope to coverage and provided readily accessible documentation and other resources for users around the world. Over the reporting period, the associated United Nations News Service produced more than 8,000 news stories.

44. Reflecting the portal's consistent popularity in all official languages, news stories from the site frequently appeared among top-ranked results on such search engines as Google News and were regularly picked up by a wide variety of websites, from news aggregator sites to media outlets and the web pages of non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. In addition, civil society organizations, educational institutions and governmental bodies, including the European Commission and a number of permanent missions to the United Nations are now linking to the portal on their respective websites. Across the United Nations system, funds, programmes, agencies, peacekeeping missions and departments and offices in the Secretariat are increasingly linking to the United Nations News Centre from their pages or using the headline service provided by the portal to automatically retrieve related stories on their own sites. A survey of websites carrying United Nations News Centre stories in French in December 2010 showed wide pickup across regions (websites in China, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Guinea, Haiti and Togo, among other countries).

F. Press releases

45. The Department continued to provide fast, accurate and comprehensive coverage of all open intergovernmental meetings and press conferences at Headquarters in New York and at other locations, as part of its news-related services. Between July 2010 and January 2011, the meetings coverage operation produced a total of 2,481 press releases, with 13,155 pages in English and French, including end-of-year round-ups of Security Council and General Assembly actions. That output, made available in hard copy at Headquarters and distributed to worldwide audiences via the Internet and United Nations information centres, included:

(a) 414 press releases covering meetings of the sixty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly, from mid-September to December 2010;

(b) 313 press releases on the Security Council, including a summit-level meeting on strengthening peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding capabilities, and substantive debates on Afghanistan, the Middle East, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, the Sudan, the international criminal tribunals, and women and peace and security, as well as press statements and matters concerning subsidiary bodies;

(c) More than 1,150 press releases concerning statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as material from other United Nations offices and departments;

(d) Close to 600 summaries of press briefings of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and other press conferences held at Headquarters.

III. Other services

A. Services to the media

46. *Media liaison and accreditation.* From 1 July 2010 to 16 December 2010, the Department processed 1,875 permanent accreditations (twice as many as last year)

and 3,329 temporary press accreditations, including almost 2,000 during the general debate and high-level meetings in September, and distributed 262 media alerts to about 4,000 media organizations, as well as press attachés of permanent missions and various offices around the United Nations system.

47. The Department conducted 18 media tours for groups of professional journalists and journalism students and provided information and logistics assistance for 640 media stake-outs. It also assisted in the holding of 183 press conferences and briefings, which were attended by 9,865 journalists. As an additional service to the press, the Department continued to expand the use of new media tools for the distribution of updated daily schedules of media events at Headquarters. For example, following a successful test launch in early 2010, the use of Twitter for schedule updates is now firmly established as a vehicle for keeping correspondents abreast of the latest media opportunities.

48. In response to requests from Member States, the Department worked in close cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security and the Protocol and Liaison Service to facilitate the access of press officers of Member States to areas that are deemed restricted during the general debate. Each permanent mission obtained one hologram decal, provided by the Security and Safety Service, which allowed their respective press officers to escort national journalists to bilateral meetings and other media events without a media liaison escort from the Department.

49. *Op-ed placement*. The Department continued to provide assistance to the office of the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials in placing opinion pieces in newspapers and other media outlets around the world (see figure VI). Through the Department's efforts, eight op-ed pieces by the Secretary-General were published in a total of 270 outlets, giving voice to the United Nations position on a wide range of issues, including nuclear disarmament and international efforts to support Haiti's recovery from the January 2010 earthquake. In addition, the Department assisted in securing interviews in media outlets worldwide for United Nations officials across the United Nations system.[2]

[2] For information on op-ed pieces placed by the network of United Nations information centres, see the report of the Secretary-General on activities of the strategic communications services (A/AC.198/2011/2).

Figure VI

IV. The United Nations website

A. Growing content and improved presentation

50. The Department has continued to expand the use of common branding and structural elements throughout the website to achieve a more coherent look and better navigation. It did so following the redesign in 2009 of the top-layer pages of www.un.org, and has applied these improvements to sites developed and maintained by the Department, as well as to sites developed for other departments. It has also continued to improve the organization, visual attractiveness, usability and cohesiveness of www.un.org.

51. An important part of the Department's work in this area was geared towards creating individual pages for all special observances mandated by the General Assembly, such as international days, weeks, years and anniversaries. The transition to a uniform layout of this group of sites has been completed. "Global Issues", another major segment on www.un.org, was redesigned and expanded to cover a range of new topics. Each thematic area now incorporates in-depth source materials and multimedia elements, such as radio interviews and videos. In February 2011, a special feature, "Resources for Speakers", was added as a supplementary resource on selected topics.

52. The Department of Public Information has developed or redesigned websites for other departments, including the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Office of Administration of Justice. All sites were developed in the six official languages and in accordance with the accessibility standards required by the General Assembly.

B. Expanding outreach through social media

53. In pursuing the goal of expanding its audiences, including in the developing countries, the Department took steps to capitalize on the outreach opportunities presented by social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, by incorporating their tools on the www.un.org language sites. These efforts by the Department are paying dividends:

(a) Since the launch of the Twitter and Facebook accounts on the Spanish version of www.un.org in March 2010, the site has gained over 5,000 Facebook fans and nearly 2,500 Twitter followers;

(b) On the French site, the Facebook page launched in October 2010 has already gained nearly 1,400 fans. In response to a 2010 website survey that showed user preference for more interactive content, interactive elements, such as quizzes, were expanded on the French site to engage visitors and draw traffic to the United Nations website.

54. After an assessment of the most popular social media networks in its target region, in September 2010 the Department's Chinese website unit launched a channel on Sina T-blog, regarded as the Chinese version of Twitter, and another channel on People Micro-blog, a key news website in China. Using these tools, the Chinese website unit has been posting daily short tweet-like messages that feature reports from the United Nations News Centre, home page videos, radio stories and a range of other materials highlighting the statements of the Secretary-General, new websites, and breaking news from the United Nations. As at 13 December 2010, the two channels together had about 25,000 fans. On United Nations Day, 24 October 2010, the United Nations Sina T-blog channel launched an event to collect messages for the 65th birthday of the United Nations from the fans. More than 200 fans sent messages in just one day, some of which were posted on the United Nations Day website in Chinese.

55. In another initiative in 2010, the Chinese website unit launched its video channels on Youku.com and Tudou.com, the top two Chinese video-sharing websites. The videos are produced by adding narration from United Nations Radio stories to footage from UNifeed. As at 13 December, 265 clips had been uploaded to each of the two sites. The videos cover peace and security, development and other global issues, and highlight the work of the Security Council and other United Nations bodies and the activities of the Secretary-General. The two channels have been viewed by more than 2.1 million users. The video coverage on the general debate of the 65th session of the General Assembly was seen by over 1.5 million people.

56. The French language unit also launched a YouTube channel in mid-September 2010. The channel is updated regularly with videos prepared by United Nations Television for the *UN in Action* series, as well as videos in French made available by other entities within the system (UNICEF, UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights). As at 10 December 2010, more than 70 videos featured on the YouTube United Nations Channel in French had received over 4,500 views.

57. The UN Spanish-language channel on YouTube was launched in December 2010.

C. Improved usage statistics

58. Since adopting in 2009 a new system for website traffic analysis, Google Analytics, the Department has continued to install the required code on existing web pages. By the end of December, virtually all pages on www.un.org were covered. Since the code was inserted throughout the year, the current statistics do not yet give a full picture, but they present a much more complete picture compared to earlier analyses. Beginning in 2011, reports based on Google Analytics will be an accurate reflection of website traffic, except for websites hosted on external servers to provide for high bandwidth requirements for the Department's multimedia products and services. Efforts will continue to achieve a more integrated traffic analysis of the entire United Nations website.

D. Multilingualism and language parity on the United Nations website

59. When providing web services to author offices, the Department routinely emphasizes the need for site content to be made available in all six official languages (see figures VII and VIII and table below), a requirement mandated by the General Assembly. This imposes an additional cost for website development, which these offices are often unable to support. To ease this burden, the Department continues to employ the cooperative arrangements it has established with universities in China, Belarus and Spain for translation of web content into Chinese, Russian and Spanish. To these existing partnerships the Department is adding translation into Arabic, in collaboration with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. The Arabic unit in the United Nations Web Services Section, in cooperation with the Arabic Translation Service, acted as a part-time host for Department for General Assembly and Conference Management interns during the summer of 2009 and 2010. As a result of this cooperation, a number of pages were translated and added to the Arabic website.

60. The partnership between the Department of Public Information and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management was further expanded through agreements signed recently with the University of Damascus, the American University of Cairo and Saint Joseph University in Beirut. Besides contributing to the translation of web pages, the students from these universities will also benefit from new opportunities for training over the next two years. The Department is also continuing its arrangement with the United Nations Volunteers programme to assist in updating and producing content in French with high-quality translations.

61. As part of the Department's efforts to move towards language parity, the recently introduced daily news-related video featured on the www.un.org home page is posted with captions in all official languages. In addition to improving multilingual access, the captioning also makes the videos accessible to persons with disabilities.

Figure VII
Percentage of United Nations website visits by language, 2010

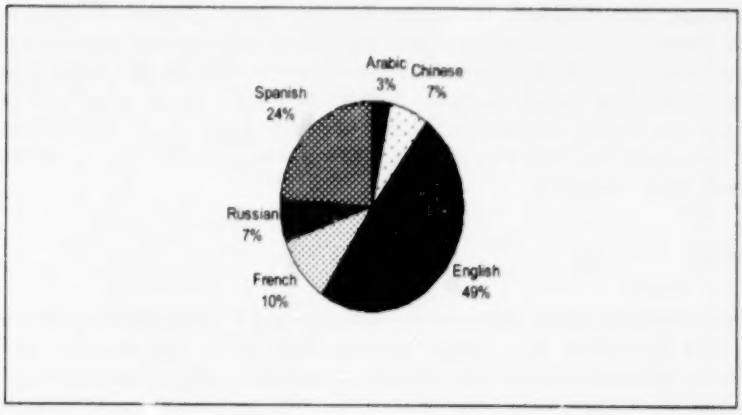
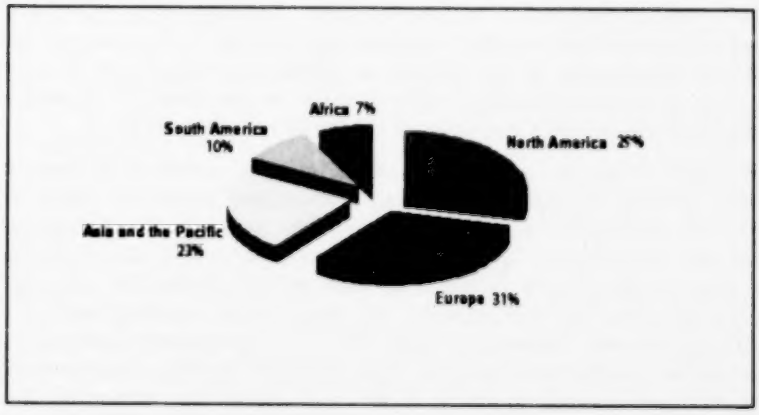


Table
Geographic distribution of United Nations website visits, by visit and page, 2010

Continent	*Visits*	*Pages per visit*
Europe	8 948 302	3.05
North America	8 260 891	3.19
Asia and the Pacific	6 420 190	2.90
South America	2 823 333	2.70
Africa	2 039 904	2.90
All continents	**28 492 620**	**2.95**

Figure VIII
Geographic distribution of United Nations website visits, 2010 (percentage)



E. Accessibility for persons with disabilities

62. In compliance with the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Department of Public Information has continued to ensure that the United Nations website is accessible to persons with disabilities, including those with visual, hearing and mobility impairment. Compliance with these requirements includes the captioning of many videos uploaded to the website, which are increasing in number. The Department has developed technical standards to assist departments and offices across the Secretariat in producing accessible web content and continues to ensure compliance with these standards.

V. Conclusions

63. **The Department of Public Information continued to work on enhancing the effectiveness and expanding the reach of a wide array of its news services and related products. To better address the needs of its varied audiences and partners in different parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries, it maintained a strong focus on traditional means of communication — radio, television and print — while at the same time making every effort to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the Internet and new media platforms, including social networking sites and mobile devices. By expanding the use of multimedia products and services and making more products available on the Internet for download in broadcast quality or in high resolution, the Department has been able to reach a more diverse, and younger, audience. At the same time, the Department continued to disseminate information to those who have no, or very limited, access to the Internet.**

64. **Despite the challenges presented by the ongoing capital master plan, which resulted in a significant dispersal of production teams and led to several technical constraints, the Department was able to ensure smooth functioning of all of its news and media support services, including during an intensive period of overlapping top-level events at the start of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Meanwhile, as part of the capital master plan process, preparations continued for the introduction of a new media asset management system that is scheduled to become operational in the course of 2011. Building on its experience of monitoring and evaluating its output, the Department used the Teletrax system (which provides information on the pickup of UNifeed material) and Google Analytics (a new system for website traffic analysis) to continuously assess its operations and make them more responsive to audience and client needs.**

65. **The Department has continued its efforts to improve multilingual content on the United Nations website, but challenges identified previously have, if anything, become more serious. Author departments and offices continue to generate and post web content in English only. Expanded use of social media could also lead to an uneven balance in content generation in different languages. On web content management, the Department worked with the Office of Information and Communications Technology to identify short-term open-source content management systems. This will help to ensure that content management becomes more organized, secure and useful for visitors to the United Nations website, while remaining within allocated resources.**